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[For further information on Tongan ideas about astronomy, see Category 502.]

9: Collocott M-5 (no date) 1922 OU9 Tonga OU9

Tongan Astronomy and Calendar

By E. E. V. Collocott

From the exceedingly fragmentary and obscure accounts it appears that the Tongans possess but the vaguest notions of the heavens and of the relations of the sky to stars and sun and moon. They evidently thought of a number of skies, one above the other. One informant expressed the opinion that the number of skies was as great as one hundred. He also suggested a connection between the skies and the great burial vaults at Mua and elsewhere, and it is worthy of note that sky and vault are called by the same name, *langi*. The stars are said to be in the highest sky.

So far as I have been able to discover, the study of astronomy was treated by the Tongans as a branch of navigation. Certain it is that these bold and skilful mariners were keen observers of the heavens and that no small part of the equipment of the old sea captains was the ability, based rather on experience and judgment than on rules, to determine when to shift from one star or constellation and to set the course by another group.

Practically the whole of the available star lore of the Tongans is embraced in sailing directions written by the late Tukuaho, a high chief who was Premier of Tonga about thirty years ago. Tukuaho, fortunately, was an intelligent diarist who carefully wrote down what he heard. His account, copied with permission of his son Tungi, Consort of Her Majesty Queen of Tonga, has been followed in the preparation of this paper.

Few if any living Tongans are able to point to and name more than a very small proportion of the stars, and only in rare instances have I been able to identify the stars named. This rapid decay of the old astronomy is doubtless due to the universal use of the mariner's compass. Star lore was preserved by the old navigators, but there is no longer need to rely upon it.

89: Wood M,Y-4,5 (1924-1937) 1975
OU9 Tonga OU9

[1891-1960]

assisted Dr. Moulton in translation work in 1904 in Sydney and was ordained that year by the New South Wales Conference. Later, he collaborated with Dr. Collocott in writing *Proverbial Sayings of the Tongans* and other contributions to anthropological research. He had a most beneficial influence on the hundreds of students who passed under his care; among these were Prince Tungi, and his sons, the present king and the premier. And what more shall be said of William Tupou, Methuselah Talakai, Charles Napa'a, and many other heroic souls who moulded and guided the Church during difficult days?

Sau Faupula, L.Th., by general consent, was the outstanding minister of his generation. Those qualified to evaluate his work have considered that no Pacific Islands minister surpassed him in dedication and in qualities of leadership. His great-grandfather, John Faupula, was the first convert in Fiji, who would have succeeded to the chieftainship in the Lau group but was forced to flee to Tonga. His son Kebuel and his grandson Robert, Sau's father, were ministers. Sau's son, Harold, is a missionary in Arnhem Land, North Australia.

Sau entered Tupou College, Nafualu, in 1925, eventually becoming dux and a teacher there in 1929. With his full teaching programme and his gardening tasks he still studied for the L.Th. and, in November 1933, completed the course, including New Testament Greek and the Latin Vulgate, being the first Pacific Islander to gain the L.Th. Diploma. He was one of the first Pacific Islands deputations to Australia in 1934. He was a representative to General Conference in 1948, 1954 and 1960. On the morning after the 1960 General Conference ended, on 27 May, he died suddenly from a heart attack. He had been the first director of the Young People's Department and also Secretary of Conference for 14 years. By his eloquence and forcefulness he exerted a powerful influence through his preaching in churches and in the open air. His transparent sincerity and consistency of life underlined his utterances. It was recognized that his loss to the Tongan Church was irreparable and, even now, his contemporaries wistfully exclaim, "If only Sau were still with us!"

The supply of Tongan ministers and teachers for Overseas Missions never faltered. When the Mission in Papua (Islands Region) was begun in 1891, John Kuli became renowned both for his preaching and his skill as a navigator; in an enthusiastic meeting at Nuku'alofa in 1910 he offered to return, but he was far too old. After the Mission in the Solomon Islands was established in 1902, James Nau, with a Samoan colleague, Pologa, showed conspicuous devotion when waiting in an exposed dinghy off an island in the Ontong Java atolls for thirteen weeks until the people ceased their opposition and allowed the teachers to land. Another faithful missionary was Paul Havea, eldest son of John Havea, who served for many years in the Solomons, including the years of Japanese occupation in the Second World War. A younger John Taufa (now Bishop in the United Church of Papua, New Guinea and the Solomons) and Daniel Palavi have laboured in Bougainville and Vella Lavella, Solomons, for nearly twenty years.

Jonathan Meleke and Ezekiel Hau'ofa went to Papua in 1937; they rallied their people during the confusion of war when overseas missionaries had been withdrawn by Government orders. Hau'ofa continued for 33 years in much isolation that called for special responsibility. Meleke died in 1944. Another devoted missionary in Papua, David Mone, said of Meleke, "I was jealous of Meleke, jealous of his goodness". David Mone, L.Th., was a strong leader, both in Papua during the war years, and afterwards as a pioneer in the Lai Valley in